-19-

18. A method for protecting software from unauthorised use, comprising the steps of :

a)   supplying said software desired to be protected to a processing apparatus ;

b)   supplying first software and, second software which being specific to a user, to said processing apparatus ;

c)   establishing a communication between said first software running on said processing apparatus, and a remote electronic transaction system ;

d)   verifying said user having a valid account, by said remote electronic transaction system[to said first software];

e)   using by said first software, a favourable result of said verification as a pre-condition for determining from said processing apparatus information related to the hardware or/and software thereof, for future reference in step f) below ;

wherein a cost is being charged from said user for the first time said steps a) to e) being carried out ; thereafter

f)   authenticating by said second software, the processing apparatus onwhich said second software is being used, say, second processing apparatus, basing on at least a part of said information related to said hardware or/and software ;

g)   using by said second software, a favourable result of said authentication as a pre-condition for permitting use of said software desired to be protected on said second processing apparatus, with no charge ;

if the result of said authentication is not favourable, repeat at least said steps c) to e) with said second processing apparatus, without re-charging from said user said cost .